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Welcome to the "EdLabor Insider" e-newsletter! In this issue:

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Have Student Loans? [Consolidate](#) Now Before Rates Rise

On July 1, 2006, the interest rates on outstanding federal student loans are expected to rise to just over seven percent -- the highest rate in six years -- and the rate on outstanding federal parent loans is expected to rise to about 7.8 percent. [Find out](#) how to consolidate your federal education loans to lock in lower rates before July 1. Don't delay!

Cost of College [E-Forum](#) : Tell Us What You Think

Today's typical college graduate holds nearly 50% more student loan debt than the typical 1993 graduate. Democrats are working hard to stop the Republican Raid on Student Aid. Tell us your thoughts about the importance of an affordable college education in our [e-forum](#) and we will make sure to share your comments with the rest of Congress.

[Education Loan Calculator](#) : See How Much You Could Save

If you are considering taking out new federal education loans, be sure to use our new [Student Loan Calculator](#) to see how much you could save on new student and parent loans under a Democratic proposal to cut new loan interest rates *in half*.

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Poor and Minority Students Are Being Left Behind on Teacher Quality

Students in the highest-minority and highest-poverty schools are less likely to be taught by highly qualified teachers, according to a new report. "It's...extremely disappointing that Republican leaders in Congress have failed to make teacher quality a higher priority. Just yesterday, a House subcommittee cut teacher quality by \$300 million -- a 10 percent cut," Rep. George Miller said. "The No Child Left Behind Act requires a highly qualified teacher in every classroom in the country. We still have a long way to go to make that goal a reality, and we must keep working hard on it." ([more](#))

Outrageous Fact of the Week: Many Hurricane Katrina Kids Still Not Getting Proper Schooling

One in four children in post-hurricane FEMA trailer parks or shelters is either not enrolled in school or misses 10 days of class each month. (*New York Times*)

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